Government agencies, Government affiliated firms and private companies as well as certain military entities. Together with their subsidiaries, the number is 208. Commerce Department licenses will be required for export by US companies to the listed entities.

GOI issued a statement on November 14, 1998 that this as a highly unfortunate development. These restrictions interfere with the free flow of trade, technology & finance and have an adverse impact on mutually beneficial business interaction. This decision reflects the continuation of a coercive approach that is entirely misplaced and cotunter-productive. Such steps are unhelpful for meaningful discussions towards an improvement in bilateral relations which is desired by both countires.

(c) The sixth round of ongoing bilateral discussion between Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission, Shri Jaswant Singh and US Deputy Secretary of State, Mr. Strobe Talbott was recently held in Rome on November 19-20, 1998. The two sides reviewed issues related to disarmament and non-proliferation, bilateral relations as well as regional and international developments. The two sides also discussed and positively evaluated the report on expert level meeting on export controls between Indian and American delegations in New Delhi on November 9-10, 1998. The Indian delegation raised its concerns about the recently published entitiers list and our access to international financial institutions. Both side agreed to meet again in January, 1999 in New Delhi.

(d) Soon after its nuclear tests, India announced a unilateral moratorium on explosive nuclear tests and also expressed its willingness to convert this moratorium into a dejure obligation. India, is engaged in discussions with key interlocuters on a range of issues, including the CTBT. India is prepared to bring these discussions to a successful conclusion, so that the entry into force of the CTBT is not delayed beyond September, 1999. India expects that other countries, will adhere to this treaty without conditions.

Food processing and agro based industries

581. SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is fact that Government have adopted a five point programme to boost food processing and agro based industries for ensuring farmers prosperity; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) and (b) While inaugurating the four day "Agro Advantage—Maharashtra" Conference, Prime Minister made the following announcements:—

(i) The Government has taken steps to make Small Farmers Agro-Business Consortium (SFAC) function a High-level coordination body at the Centre and in the States to promote public and private investments in agro-business. It will also encourage mutually beneficial collaboration between the cooperative sector and the corporate sector.

(ii) The Government has taken steps to strengthen and expand the Futures Exchanges in many commodities. A proper future exchange is important as it will help the farmer survive the vagaries of market forces, as other businesses do. It will provide him a place to hedge his produce and reduce his risk. The Central Government has also recently strengthenec the Forward Markets Commission which will soon have many regiona offices.

(iii) There is considerable scope for increasing our exports of agro-products by taking advantage of India's geographical and climatic strengths. Our country can also be a very good production base for joint ventures for export to third countries. The Ministry

of Commerce has drawn up a comprehensive plan for promotion of farm exports that will substantially increase our present low share of world trade.

(iv) The Government will soon unveil a National Rural Cooperative Policy and enact the long-pending Multi-State Cooperative Act.

(v) In line with the recommendations of the National Task Force on Information Technology, the Government has decided to promote Information Technology in agriculture and agro-business in a big way. The government will constitute a high-level Task force on Food and Agro-Industries management Policy, headed by Agriculture Minister Shri Som Pal, it will comprise representatives from the States, agriculture universities and R&D centres, prominent farmers and businessmen in the sector. The Task Force will submit an action plan for examination and adoption by the Government within the next three months.

(vi) In response to the demands of the State Governments, Prime Minister advised the Government of Maharashtra should prepare a scheme for helping the farmers affected by natural calamities so that Central Government can examine the scheme and consider providing necessary help to the State Government.

कार्यक्रमों का प्रसारण

582. **प्रो॰ राम गोपाल यादव:**
श्री रमाशंकर कौशिक:

(क) क्या प्रधान मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या दूरदर्शन ने स्वतन्त्रता आन्दोलन एवं पिछले पचास वर्षों के दौरान हुई प्रगति पर कार्यक्रम दिखाने हेतु विभिन्न निर्माताओं के साथ कोई अनुबंध किया था:

(ख) यदि हां, तो सम्बन्धित निर्माताओं के नाम तथा उनसे सम्बन्धित कार्यक्रमों का ब्यौरा क्या है; और

(ग) उक्त कार्यक्रमों पर दूरदर्शन द्वारा कितनी धनराशि खर्च की गई तथा इस पर जनता एवं सरकार की क्या प्रतिक्रिया हुई तथा इन कार्यक्रमों को कितनी सफलता मिली?

सूचना और प्रसारण मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री (श्री मुख्तार नकवी): (क) से (ग) सूचना एकत्र की जा रही है और सभा पटल पर रख दी जाएगी।

Legislation on Broadcasting Bill

583. SHRIMATI JAYAPRADA NAHATA:
SHRI YERRA NARAYANASWAMY:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Cable Networks Association has represented for early legislation on the Broadcasting Bill;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken to protect the sovereignty and integrity by early enactment?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI MUKHTAR NAQVI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Association requested the Government to enact a broadcasting law or amend the existing Cable law so as to protect the interests of the individual cable operators and prevent the emergence of powerful monopolies in this sector.

(c) This Ministry had convened a meeting on 3.11.98 with representatives of various cable operator associations to discuss various aspects of cable and broadcast law. Requisite steps have been initiated for finalising the provisions of the new Broadcasting Bill.

New AIR Station at Salem

584. SHRI S. VIDUTHALAI VIRUMBI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state: